

The 46th Season

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Ivoryton Playhouse for the Performing Arts
presents



Max Morath THE RAGTIME YEARS

Staged by NEAL KENYON and MAX MORATH

Setting: Leo Meyers

Lighting: Tom Gordon

Production Stage Manager: Tom Gordon

Assistant Stage Manager: John MacFarlane

Executive Assistant to Mr. Morath: Nancy Robbins

A production of Normacks, Inc., New York

Mr. Morath is playing a Mason & Hamlin Piano

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Max Morath

Although ragtime not too long ago was virtually a lost art, today it is experiencing a revival of considerable proportions. The work of Max Morath is quite likely the biggest reason behind that revival.

Since Morath first sprang to public notice in 1960, his sparkling offerings of turn-of-the-century "urban folk music" have been heard throughout the country, via television, radio, theatre, records, concerts and nightclubs.

Colorado-born, Max Morath was a radio and TV actor, writer, announcer and general entertainer before he devoted his career to ragtime. It was while playing the period music for old-fashioned melodramas in the West that he became fascinated by it, and soon began playing it in cabarets, as well as researching every facet that he could get his hands on. A producer for National Educational Television caught Morath, proposed that he turn his knowledge of the time into a series, and "The Ragtime Era" was born.

The show dealt with the development of the music of the period, and critics across the country gave wholehearted approval when the series was aired, resulting in a host of bookings for Morath at clubs, concerts and industrial conventions.

The success of 1960's "The Ragtime Era" also led to another NET series, "Turn of the Century," in which Morath turned toward the social history of the time, as reflected through its music. Again, the critics were impressed with his seemingly offhand, colloquial approach to history, with one critic noting that his "smooth documentary of humor, morals, art, and recreation should be required reading for the too-academically inclined."

Morath's first live appearance in New York, at the famed Blue Angel in 1963, augmented the impression he'd already made with his television appearances. Now established in a unique show business career, Morath premiered his versatile Original Rag Quartet a year later at New York's historic Village Vanguard, where he was rapturously received by the critics. With the quartet he deepened his research into the folk roots of popular music and toured widely in colleges, as a featured act with Dinah Shore in Las Vegas, and elsewhere.

In February of 1969, he opened a one-man off-Broadway show, Max Morath at the "Turn of the Century," a thoroughgoing smash which eventually led to a tour in theatres and colleges across the country.

"The Ragtime Years" is Max's new one-man show, which he has co-directed with Neal Kenyon, of "Dames at Sea" fame. Current LPs on Vanguard are "The Best of Scott Joplin" (double album) and "The World of Scott Joplin."

Max Morath maintains a studio and office in New York and lives in suburban New Jersey with his wife and three children.



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